

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
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R 270824Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9925
INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
USLO PEKING
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI
USMISSION USNATO
COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 13573

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, MARR, JA
SUBJECT: FIRING OF JOINT STAFF COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

REF: TOKYO 13490
1. DURING CALL BY JAPAN COUNTRY DIRECTOR, ROMBERG ON
JULY 27, LDP EXECUTIVE COUNCIL CHAIRMAN AND FORMER
DEFENSE MINISTER NAKASONE SAID THAT DISMISSAL OF GENERAL
KURISU AS CHAIRMAN OF JOINT STAFF COUNCIL WAS NECESSARY
IN ORDER TO REAFFIRM PRINCIPLE OF CIVILIAN CONTROL OF
MILITARY. NAKASONE TOOK ISSUE, HOWEVER, WITH MANNER OF
DISMISSAL, SAYING THAT INSTEAD OF HAVING DEFENSE MINISTER
KANEMARU FIRE KURISU AT A PRESS CONFERENCE, PRIME
MINISTER FUKUDA, AS COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF JAPANESE
ARMED FORCES, SHOULD FIRST HAVE MET WITH KURISU TO HEAR
HIS SIDE OF STORY AND THEN, IF KURISU'S EXPLANATION UN-
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CONVINCING, HAVE DEMANDED HIS RESIGNATION. NAKASONE
NOTED THAT NOT ONLY WAS THIS METHOD USED BY PRESIDENTS
TRUMAN AND CARTER IN DISMISSING, RESPECTIVELY, GENERALS
MAC CARTHUR AND SINGLAUB, BUT THAT IT WAS ALSO TRADI-
TIONAL JAPANESE WAY OF DISPOSING GRACEFULLY OF WARRIOR
WHO HAD VIOLATED SAMURAI CODE. NAKASONE SAID THAT HE
TELEPHONED PRIME MINISTER ON JULY 25 TO URGE THIS COURSE

OF ACTION AND THAT PRIME MINISTER FINALLY AGREED, BUT BY TIME FUKUDA REACHED KANEMARU, LATTER WAS ALREADY HOLDING PRESS CONFERENCE.

2. NAKASONE ASSURED ROMBERG THAT INCIDENT WOULD NOT HAVE ANY EFFECT ON U.S.-JAPAN DEFENSE COOPERATION NOR WOULD IT INFLUENCE STEADILY EVOLVING JAPANESE CONSENSUS ON NECESSITY OF SELF-DEFENSE FORCES. IN FACT, SAID NAKASONE, INCIDENT MAY WELL HAVE SERVED ONE USEFUL PURPOSE. BY HIGHLIGHTING GAP IN EXISTING SELF-DEFENSE LAW WITH REGARD TO DEPLOYMENT OF SELF-DEFENSE FORCES IN AN EMERGENCY, KURISU INCIDENT HAD MADE IT CERTAIN GOJ WOULD SUBMIT LAW CLOSING THE GAP TO NEXT REGULAR DIET SESSION AND CREATED POLITICAL MOOD WHEREBY LAW COULD BE ENACTED WITHOUT MUCH OPPOSITION. MANSFIELD

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Message Attributes

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